



[Home](#) > [Statistics](#) > [Labour](#) > [Employment and unemployment](#) > [Barriers and Incentives to Labour Force Participation, Australia](#)
> [March 2025](#)

 This is not the latest release
[View the latest release](#)

Barriers and Incentives to Labour Force Participation, Australia

People not working, or working less than they prefer, including whether they want to work, are looking for work, and factors for them to start working

Reference period March 2025

Released 12/08/2025

On this page

[Key statistics](#)

[People who did not have a job](#)

[People who did not want to work](#)

[People who were not available to work](#)

[Incentives to work](#)

[Data downloads](#)

[Methodology](#)

Key statistics

In March quarter 2025:

- 1.2 million people (aged 18-75) without a (paid) job wanted a job, with 1.1 million available to start within 4 weeks.
- The most common reason men who wanted a job were unavailable to start within 4 weeks was 'Short-term illness or injury'.
- The most common reason women who wanted a job were unavailable to start within 4 weeks was 'Caring for children'.
- 2.1 million people without a job did not want a job, with a further 1.9 million either retired or permanently unable to work.

This release is published on a quarterly basis, with quarterly data published for the September, December and March quarters, and a combined June quarter and annual financial year release.

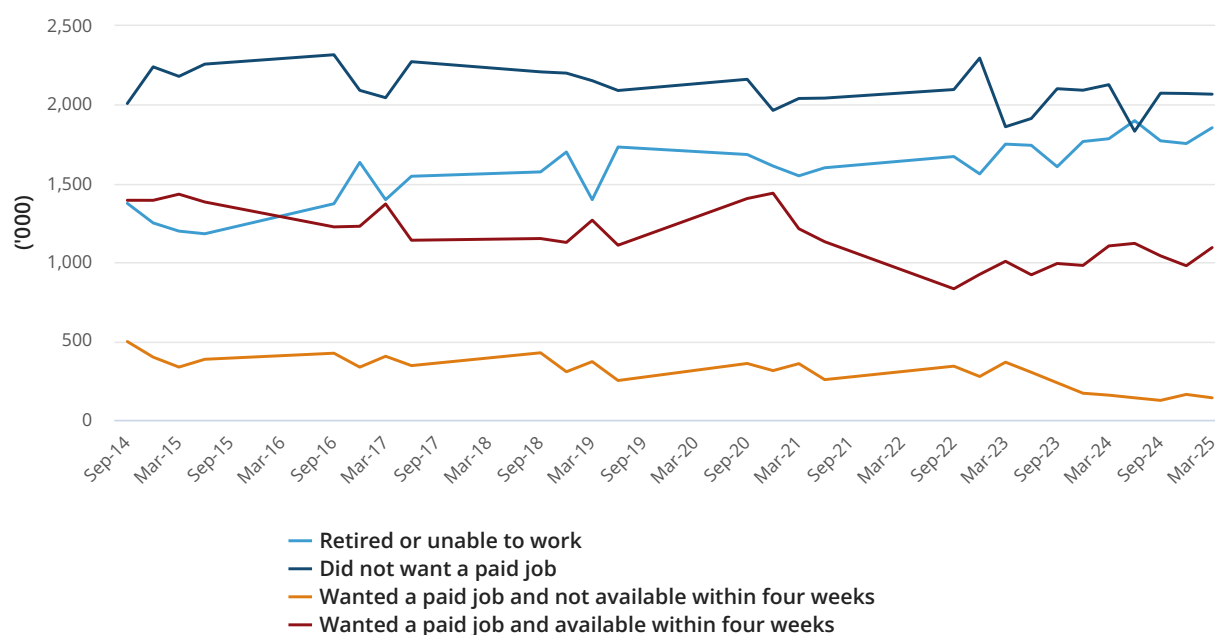
People who did not have a job

In March quarter 2025, there were 19 million people aged 18-75 years. Of these:

- 14 million were employed or had a job to start or return to (73%)
- 1.9 million were retired or permanently unable to work (10%)
- 3.3 million did not have a (paid) job (17%) - 1.2 million people wanted a (paid) job (37%) and 2.1 million people did not want a (paid) job (63%).

Of the 1.2 million people who wanted a job, 1.1 million (89%) were available within 4 weeks and 140,000 (11%) were not available within 4 weeks.

Graph 1 - People who did not have a job (aged 18-75)



Note: The survey was conducted every second year prior to 2022-23.

In March quarter 2025, of those aged 18-75 years who did not have a job, were not retired and not permanently unable to work:

- 2.1 million had a long-term health condition, and of these, 741,300 (35%) wanted a paid job.
- 1.3 million had a disability, with 493,000 of these people wanting a paid job (38%).

Note that people can report having both a long-term health condition and a disability.

People who did not want to work

Of the 2.1 million people aged 18-75 years who did not want a job in March 2025, the main reason for not wanting a job was 'No need, satisfied with current arrangements' (41%). For both men and women aged 18-24 years, 'Studying or returning to studies' was the main reason for not wanting a job (78% for men and 65% for women).

For women aged 25-39 years, 'Caring for children' (53%) was the main reason for not wanting a job, down from 70% in December 2024.

For both men and women aged 40-54 years, 'Long-term health condition or disability' was the main reason for not wanting a job (25% for men and 26% for Women).

People who were not available to work

The main reasons women who wanted a job were not available within 4 weeks were:

- Caring for children (42%)
- Caring for ill, disabled or elderly (17%).

The main reasons men who wanted a job were not available within 4 weeks were:

- Short-term illness or injury (40%).
- Long-term health condition or disability (28%).

Incentives to work

Of the 3.3 million people who did not have a job in March quarter 2025, the most important factor associated with either returning to or commencing work was 'Finding a job that matches skills and experience', which was rated as 'Very important' by 34% of people.

For people with a long-term health condition, the most important factors were 'Ability to work part-time hours' (31%) and 'Finding a job that matches skills and experience' (31%). For people with a disability, it was 'Finding a job that matches skills and experience' (32%).

Data downloads

Quarterly time series

[Download all \(39.44 MB\)](#)

Table Q1. Participation status

[Download XLSX](#)
[2 MB]

Table Q2. Whether wanted a job or more hours

[Download XLSX](#)
[788.69 KB]

Table Q3. Unavailable workers and job seekers

[Download XLSX](#)
[2.95 MB]

Table Q4. Reasons not looking for work or more hours

[Download XLSX](#)
[7.36 MB]

Table Q5. Difficulties finding work or more hours

[Download XLSX](#)
[4.95 MB]

Table Q6. Reasons for not wanting to work or more hours

[Download XLSX](#)
[19.61 MB]

Table Q7. Incentives to work

[↓ Download XLSX](#)
[3.72 MB]

Previous catalogue number

This release previously used catalogue number 6239.0.

Methodology

[Barriers and Incentives to Labour Force Participation, Australia methodology, March 2025](#)